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PANIC IN PUNTA GORDA.

A Solemn Religious Ceremony Broken Up.

This is a true story, told by Mr. Joseph Ralph and vouched for by Johnie Rasch. Both of these gentlemen will be vouched for by all who know them:—

It was fifteen years ago perhaps, that the El Palmetto cigar factory with a full force of Cuban workmen contributed its share to the prosperity of Punta Gorda. These Cubans were all devout Catholics; and a good priest in Tampa, knowing of their being here without spiritual counsel, came over to preach to them and administer the sacraments of the church. On arriving, he was directed to Mr. Ralph as a prominent and devout Catholic and a gentleman well acquainted with the conditions existing at the time in Punta Gorda. One of these conditions was the want of a house of worship.

Mr. Ralph kept a large taxidermist shop on the corner of King street and Marian avenue. On the counters and shelves were a multitude of horrible objects, such as smiling alligators in every conceivable posture of mischief or murder, bristling panthers and wildcats; sharks and devil fish; raccoons, foxes, huge black bears, and great birds of many kinds standing in stately dignity with eyes solemnly fixed on the audience. Indeed, it was a very uncanny looking place, presenting a spectacle to try the nerves of the timid. And near the rear door stood a box containing some live and very untamed rattlesnakes. Upstairs, three half-grown frolicsome dogs snoozed peacefully, when not rollicking about downstairs. The snakes and the dogs should be kept in mind, as they are the axletrees of the story.

Well, the good priest proceeded to Mr. Ralph's shop, introduced himself and stated his object. He was given a cordial welcome, and then the question arose as to a suitable place to celebrate the mass. Various suggestions were made, but the priest decided that the shop, being centrally located, was the best place and all that was necessary was to move the counters back against the shelves and place seats in the middle of the room. Mr. Ralph agreed and arranged things accordingly.

At the time appointed, the Cubans with their wives and children came in and took seats, and the services began. The silent and awful menagerie on the counters and shelves gazed upon the worshippers, who, in turn, cast suspicious glances at the array of animals about them. The women particularly manifested uneasiness. They seemed to fear that a bear, a panther or an alligator might at any moment leap down upon them and devour them, and they were plainly restless.

Just as they were all kneeling down to receive the mass, two men came in at the back door and sat down upon the box containing the rattlesnakes. This disturbed the reptiles and they manifested their displeasure by loudly sounding their rattles, a sound well known to the worshippers and it

added greatly to the uneasiness of all. The two men, themselves frightened, hastily, but quietly withdrew, and the priest proceeded with his ministrations.

All were kneeling with their faces towards the front door. The stairs came down into the rear part of the room. Suddenly and without a word of warning, those three rascally puppies came capering down stairs and rushed and rolled and tumbled upon the legs of those kneeling in the rear rank. A fat Cuban woman received the full force of their impetus in the rear; and as their toenails scratched her calves, she was instantly persuaded that that whole box of rattlesnakes, aided and abetted by bears and catamounts, were seeking her immediate destruction. Accordingly, she uttered a blood-curdling shriek, bolted headlong over those in front of her and rushed screaming up the street, crying out "snakes" in Spanish and bawling for a doctor.

On the instant, panic seized the entire crowd and, with wild yells and horrible Spanish imprecations, they rushed pell-mell out of the door and fled for dear life up the street. Women ran screaming and men howling, and the welkin rang with objurgatory Spanish enough to last Havana for a week.

Merchants, clerks and customers rushed to their doors to see what all the clamor and uproar was about; and seeing the Cubans coming with disheveled hair, waving arms and multitudinous yells and shrieks, they also were seized with panic and rushed back into the stores, closed and barricaded the doors and began an instant and diligent search for defensive weapons. The general panic lasted for two or three hours before it was quieted down. How it was quieted is not reported, but it is supposed to have simply exhausted itself.

Meantime, the priest and Ralph were left alone in the midst of a wreck of chairs, an unscathed silent menagerie and three smiling puppies. The priest looked at Ralph, and Ralph looked at the priest. Ralph started to say, "Well, I'll be dad-faddled," but he respected the priest and said only, and meekly,

"Father, I hope you don't blame me for this."

"Certainly not," replied the priest; "it was all my fault;" and then they shook hands and set to work putting things in order, while the puppies and other animals looked on.

This was the first attempt to celebrate mass in Punta Gorda, and Mr. Ralph says that he will never forget it.

Times-Union Short Talks:—We protest against the insinuation conveyed in the following paragraph from the DeFuniak Breeze: "If the red-headed editor of the PUNTA GORDA HERALD is not careful he will print a fish story that he does not believe himself." While the Times-Union can only wonder at some of the stories Brother Jordan tells, we refuse to believe that he is capable of telling any that he is not fully persuaded in his own mind is true, whether he talks of the singing fish, the blushing tree, or the useful and altruistic sawfish.

TO PROTECT CATTLE

From the Injurious Effects of Animal Parasites.

The following is the text of a bulletin prepared by Prof. Jno. M. Scott, of the Florida Experiment Station:

Perhaps in no section of Florida are the cattle free from animal parasites. Every farmer, whether he owns one animal or one hundred, ought to be interested enough to protect his animals from the injurious effects of these parasites. We have been using at the Experiment Station for the year a dip which has proved quite satisfactory. The formula was prescribed by Dr. Nelson S. Mayo, and is as follows:

White arsenic two-fifths pound. Sodium carbonate (crystals) one and one-eighth pound. Yellow soap one and one-eighth pound. Pine tar one-half pint. Dissolve the arsenic by boiling it for half an hour in one gallon of water. Add the dissolved arsenic to five gallons of water. Shave the soap, mix it with the soda, and dissolve the mixture in one gallon of water. When dissolved, pour in the tar, pouring in slowly in a fine stream, and stirring meanwhile so as to get it into the solution. Then mix it with the arsenic solution, and add water to make twenty-five gallons in all.

This is to be used as a dip, spray, or wash. It loses but little by age. The solution not only kills the ticks, but also kills all other animal parasites with which it comes in contact. It may be applied either with a brush or a sprayer, or it may be put in a dipping-tank through which the animal is passed.

One of the worst parasites with which we have to deal is the cattle tick, which causes Texas or splenic fever. The loss among native stock from this disease is quite heavy; but perhaps most of the loss is caused not by the fever, but by the heavy drain upon the animal's system from the large quantity of blood taken by the ticks. One tick consumes only a small quantity; but the continued feeding of several thousand ticks upon one animal soon exhausts its constitution and vitality. This is especially true of young animals, such as calves from six weeks to one year old—a period when they ought to be making their best development and growth. If at this time they are feeding several thousand ticks, instead of growing and developing as they should, they will actually become smaller. The young animal once stunted in growth will never develop as it would have done, if it had received proper care and treatment from the first. Besides suffering continuously from irritation and injury of the skin. The tick when attaching itself to the animal's body punctures the skin. The puncture is soon surrounded by an area of intense inflammation, which results in the formation of readily visible scabs.

The injury to the live-stock owner by the ticks is not confined to the loss of blood, and the irritation of the skin caused to his cattle. It has been estimated that the loss to the dairyman caused by the cows being heavily infested

with ticks is equal to one quart of milk a day for each cow. This loss amounts in a year to no less than 275—300 quarts (70 to 75 gallons) of milk for each cow. This means a yearly loss of \$20—\$25.

Much the same is true of cows on the range when nursing calves. The cow has to feed the ticks. Hence, if the tick abstract the equivalent of one quart of milk a day from dairy cattle, doubtless they reduce in some similar proportion the milk of the range cow, whose calf must lose that amount, and the calf likewise suffers a corresponding drain from its own ticks. How can we expect our cattle raised in tick-infested sections to develop as they ought to develop?

Of course the best solution of the problem is the eradication of the ticks, and this could be accomplished if every live-stock owner would co-operate with other live-stock men. It would of course follow that cattle from other tick-infested states would not be allowed to be shipped into Florida. It seems, however, at present that Florida may be the last state in the Union to thoroughly eradicate this pest.

Perhaps the next best method will be for each farmer to keep the ticks under control by constant spraying or dipping. There are a number of proprietary dips upon the market which are very good when properly applied; but the greatest drawback to the proprietary dips is their expense. Most of these preparations cost from \$1 \$1.50 a gallon, and one gallon makes about twenty gallons of dip; so that the dip costs from five to eight cents a gallon. This is a considerable expense. There are, however, several good dips (one of which is given above), which the farmer himself can prepare at a much less cost.

Gainesville Sun:—If something is not done to reduce the burden of taxation under which the people of Florida are now laboring there is going to be a political revolution in Florida ere many years. Notwithstanding that valuations have more than trebled during the past quarter of a century, the rate of taxation in Gainesville district, including State, county, city and sub-school district, is now 46½ mills, which is entirely too high, even upon a property valuation of one-half, for the benefits derived.

Orlando Sentinel:—One hundred bushels per acre is what Mr. L. P. Winegard, of Formosa, estimates his corn crop will yield him. He brought two stalks to the Sentinel office Saturday morning, one measuring 14 and the other 12 feet, having 7 large ears on the two. This corn was grown on bottom land, one plowing, no hoeing; 500 pounds fertilizer per acre; rows 100 feet long; hills 3 feet apart; averaging 180 ears to row, which it is claimed will shell out 100 bushels per acre.

Times-Union:—A recent big land deal in West Florida was the purchase by the Graves-Tatum Company of 50,000 acres in Washington county, through which one can drive thirty-two miles in a straight line. The same company also owns 27,000 acres of timber lands in Walton county.

THE ORANGE OUTLOOK.

Summary of Views of Various Persons and Papers.

It should be understood that any opinions expressed now as to the coming orange crop are simply guesses, and estimates given by those considered as excellent authority are subject to modification and material alteration before October, the time when shipping will be well under weigh. A tree that is now well loaded with fruit, may be partially or wholly stripped of its crop before the shipping season arrives. Gales may shake off the fruit; too much rain may cause splitting and dropping, and several other things may occur to materially reduce present estimates. This much being understood, a summary of views and estimates recently given is as follows:—

An estimate of 4,500,000 boxes is said by the St. Petersburg Independent to be double as much as the real crop. Same paper says that \$1.00 a box will not pay the expense of maintaining a grove. George Meares, who, according to the St. Petersburg Times, is an authority on the subject, says that the crop of Hillsborough county will be very light, having been cut off by the scale, white fly and lack of rain. A very few groves have fairly good crops, but a great number have scarcely any oranges on them.

On the other hand, J. N. Youngblood, who has groves at Parrish and Green Springs, tells the Tampa Times that he will have a large crop and that the groves in all sections of the county are showing splendid fruit. Walter Drennen, a big grower of Orange county, tells the same paper that the crop in his county is the largest ever grown and the fruit absolutely the finest.

The Fort Myers Press alleges that there is every evidence that the largest crop of oranges and grapefruit will be shipped from Lee county the coming season than ever before; also, that the crop in other parts of the State will not be nearly as large as it should be. S. P. Bruton, a packer and shipper of Fort Myers, stated to a Produce News man in Baltimore on July 23rd that the coming crop will be fully equal to that of last year and the fruit better. Taking the State as a whole, oranges, grapefruit and tangerines never looked better. Mr. Bruton's views co-incide with those of a noted Tampa authority as expressed in the Times of last Friday.

The DeLand Record thinks that the crop of Volusia county will be a third or a half larger than last year, with fruit of larger size. Growers will hold for \$1.00 a box on the trees, and have good prospects of getting it.

A New York Packer correspondent traveling in Marion county last month appears to have paid but little attention to the orange crop, but he reports that S. F. Rou, of Lowell, who shipped 7,000 boxes last season, will have about the same crop this winter. At Electra, he found an average crop on the groves of J. H. Halford and D. F. Stebelton; also, (Continued on page 2.)